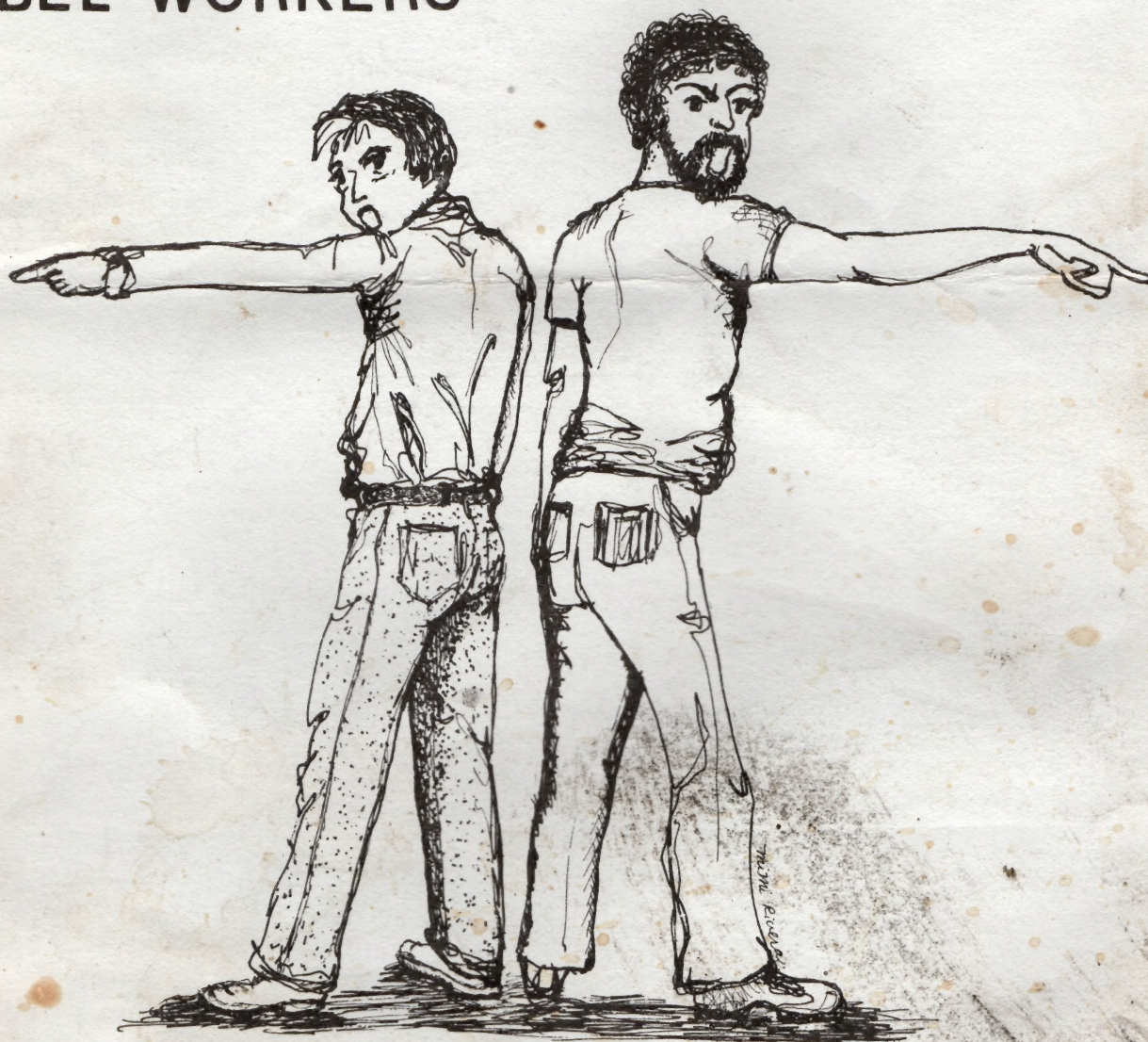


Volume 3  
Number 2 .50¢

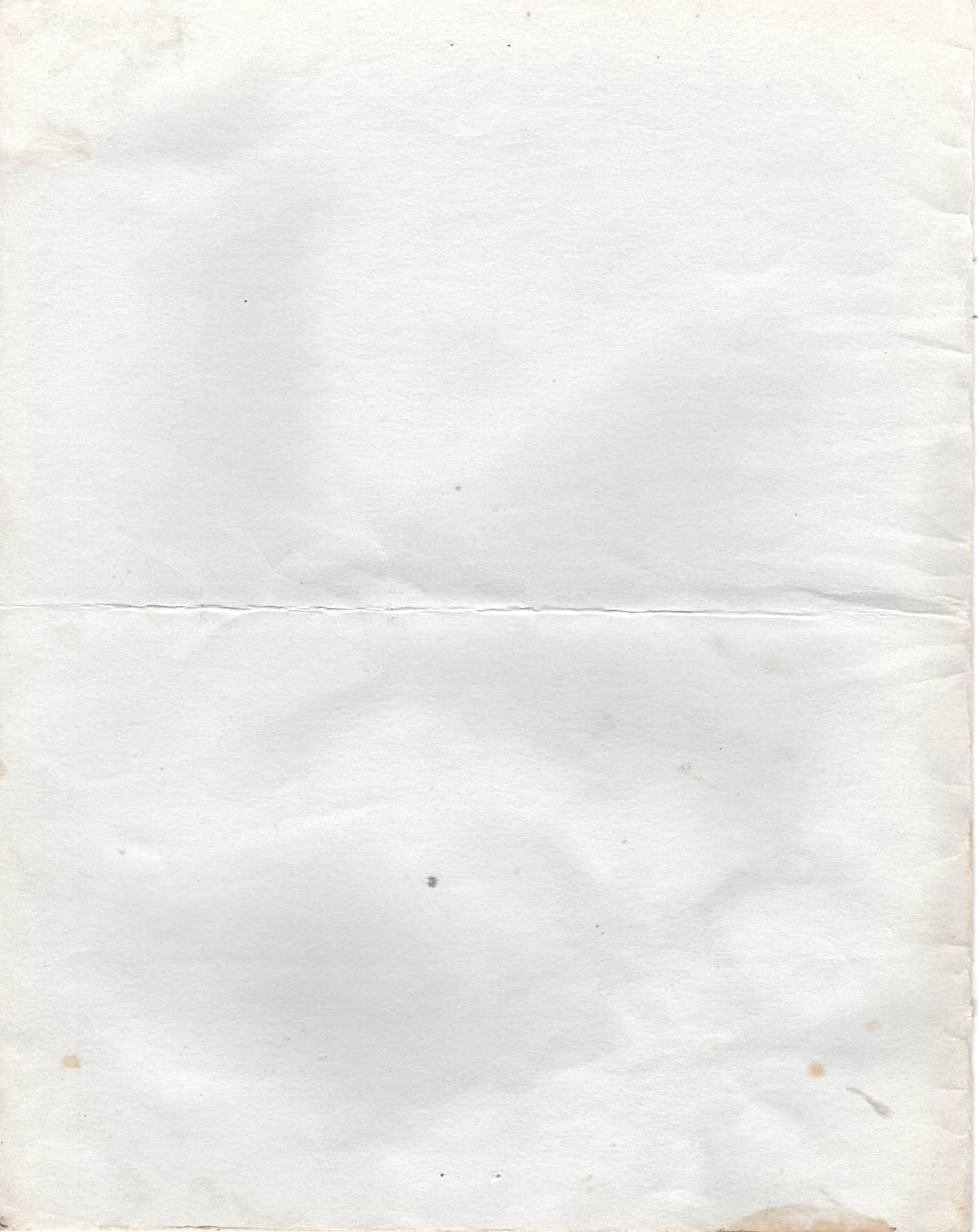
# SELF MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

REBEL WORKERS



CONSERVATIVE UNIONS







## TO OUR READERS

As some of you may have noticed, the address for Resurgence has changed. Yes, we have moved! This explains why we have been slower than usual in getting out this issue. So please make a note of our new address when sending us your praise and any financial contributions. All bills, insults, and poison pen letters should be sent to our old address.

\*\*\*\*\*

For those of you who are new to what the newsletter is all about, this publication was created to promote an ongoing discussion amongst North American anarchist-syndicalists, anarchist-communists, wobblies, and libertarian labor radicals about building a libertarian labor movement. The starting point for our discussion was Sam Dolgoff's Notes for a Discussion on the Regeneration of the American Labor Movement (copies available on request). Contributors to this newsletter are asked to familiarize themselves with the "Notes" and should be in general agreement. It is hoped that thru this discussion will evolve, not only an agreed upon direction for building a libertarian labor movement, but also a network of activists to "raise hell" on their jobs.

Those of us already active in this network, however, do not see the labor movement as an end in itself. Piecemeal reforms can never get rid of the fundamental ills of capitalism: wage slavery, economic exploitation, and bureaucratic domination. For this reason we believe the main goal of the labor movement must be to prepare the poor and working classes for the expropriation of the means of production and the collective management of production and distribution. This "self-management" must mean the abolition of a separate class of owners and managers, and allow full direct decision making by assemblies of all workers in each workplace. Self-management must not be introduced from above by the State or capitalist managers (for what the boss gives, the boss can take away) but created from below by the workers themselves. The various units of self-management, while remaining autonomous in their own area, will then federate with each other on the local, regional, and global scale to insure the distribution of goods according to need and the contribution of labor according to ability.

We encourage anyone who shares these aims, to write articles and letters for publication. In particular we would like news about wildcats, rank and file direct action, and attempts at bypassing union bureaucracy and government labor regulation. Equally important are reports of efforts at organizing independent unions, struggles for greater worker control of the job, and practical experiences at self-management. Contributions should be typed double space and sent to:

RESURGENCE  
Box 2824  
Stn. A  
Champaign, IL 61820

---

### In This Issue:

### Page

Labor Log

3

Rebel Workers and Conservative Unions: A Debate  
Tom Wetzel and Mike Hargis

7

The Steel Haulers' Revolt by Jeff Stein

Part I: Lessons of the FASH Strike

13

Part II: Steel Haulers Wildcat at Contract Time

21



# LABOR LOG

## Dog Day for A.R.F.

The Alliance of the Rank-and-File (A.R.F.), a reform caucus within the San Francisco local of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union, received a setback on September 18 last year. On that day the international officials placed the 17,000 member Local #2 into trusteeship, which in effect places all democratic processes in the local union with control by a stooge appointed by the top union bureaucrats. The move came just in time to head off a rising tide of insurgence in the San Francisco local.

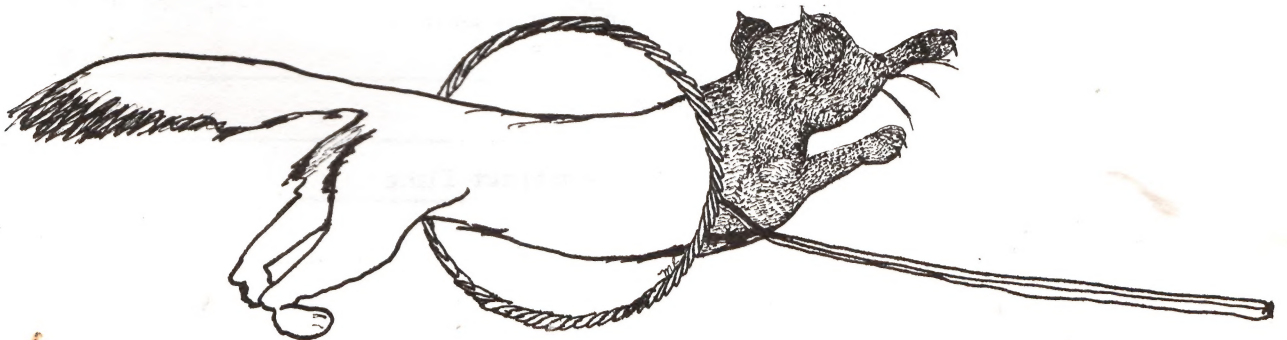
Four months previous, ARF had sponsored a successful electoral campaign to dump the incumbent president of the local, Joe Belardi. This was followed by a summer wave of rank and file militancy, including numerous job actions and a successful 67 day strike at a chain of coffee shops. It soon became obvious that the official leadership (including "reformers" as well as Belardi hold-overs) was a drag on the efforts of the local members. Pressure built up for restricting the powers and privileges of local officials and developing a rank-and-file controlled shop steward system. A conflict developed between ARF and the new local president over the issue of holding steward elections on the job site rather than in the union headquarters. President McDonald insisted on holding the elections in the union office, away from the shop floor and on the bureaucracy's "home turf".

ARF was not satisfied with the way the steward elections were conducted and began to agitate for changing the local's by-laws to require on-site elections. The caucus planned to bring up the issue at the September 19th union meeting. By an odd coincidence the trusteeship was declared on September 18th. The meeting of Local #2 was cancelled.

The experience of ARF is not unlike efforts in other unions to use formal union channels to try to win rank-and-file control. "Reform" candidates who were enthusiastic about decentralization all too often have a change of heart after they're in office. The more firmly entrenched officials at the very top can call into play a sophisticated array of political maneuvers to head off grass-roots electoral movements. Government officials turn a deaf ear to the cries of union members for justice, since politicians wish to avoid offending powerful labor leaders. All these factors suggest that relying on the legal channels for maintaining membership control is a questionable proposition at best.

The only way union officials can be made to "play by the rules" is by using the very same direct action tactics against them as against the bosses. If the members of Local #2 had walked off their jobs immediately following the trusteeship move, they could have forced the international officials to back down. If the officials had refused, the members would have been in a good position to break off from the bureaucracy completely.

At the moment "ARF" is officially dead. In response to the trusteeship, former ARF activists have formed "C.A.T." (Coalition Against the Trusteeship). If the new name signals a turn towards a wildcat unionism and direct action, then perhaps old dogs can learn new tricks.





## Labor Rewards Its Enemies

For all the media talk about bad blood between U.S. President Jimmy Carter and the leadership of the major U.S. unions, not much discussion has centered on the most significant factor, the unwillingness of most union officials to break relations with the Carter administration and use their economic muscle to influence government policies. Under Jimmy Carter's regime there has been a steady erosion of union member's civil rights and worker living standards. Carter has not followed through on his promises to reform labor laws to make bureaucratic style union organizing easier. Instead the administration has launched a blatant "austerity" program, which has proved an embarrassment for top union officials. It has caused a great build-up of rank and file pressure on the U.S. labor bureaucracy. Union officials had previously managed to maintain a certain amount of credibility with rebel workers only by being able to negotiate periodic wage increases. Now even this has been called into question.

Consider these developments:

---In early December Francis Burkhardt, a Department of Labor official was fired as a warning to the AFL-CIO. Burkhardt had been a research director of the AFL-CIO painters union and a former assistant in the AFL-CIO legislative department, before taking his government position. An official AFL-CIO spokesman expressed dismay in an official announcement for the labor bureaucracy. Burkhardt went on and added, "My firing may have been a shot at George Meany. After all, I'm probably the closest to the AFL-CIO of anyone in the whole administration."

---A concerted effort by the Carter administration to stir internal dissension within the AFL-CIO, scored its first success on December 11. President of the Communications Workers of America, Glenn Watts, publicly criticized Meany's opposition to Carter's austerity program. Saying that Meany "has done a tremendous disservice to the country and the labor movement", Watts suggested that he didn't think the 84 year old federation president "or anyone else is so indispensable that he can't be replaced."

---On December 19th, AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Lane Kirkland resigned from two government advisory committees, one on arms control and the other on women, in response to Carter's dropping AFL-CIO president Meany from the board of directors of the Communications Satellite Corporation. Meany had served on the ComSat board since he was appointed in 1964 by U.S. President Lyndon Johnson.

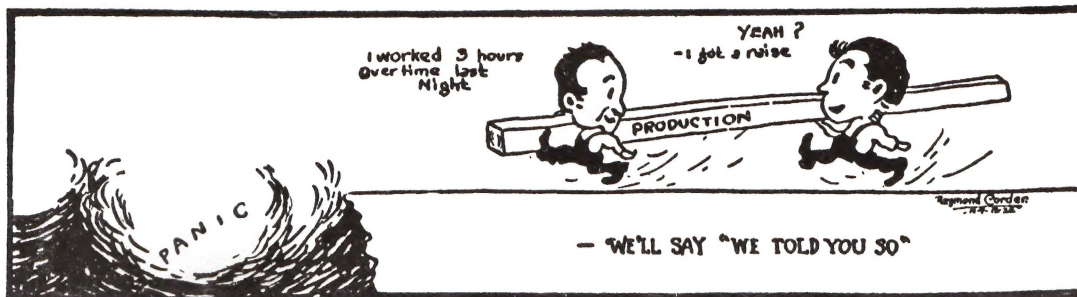
---In mid-January AFL-CIO president Meany met personally with Carter to discuss the rift between the Carter regime and the labor bureaucracy. Carter made promises to do better on efforts to reform labor laws, which pleased Meany. A few days later, the Carter forces successfully defended the Davis-Bacon Act from legislative efforts to repeal it. The Davis-Bacon Act requires wages on government construction projects to match the prevailing wage rates in the local area. It thus prevents non-union contractors from under-bidding union contractors for federal projects.

---On the same day that Carter met with Meany, talks were also held with other important union officials, including Jerry Wurf, president of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees union. Wurf, whose union's members have been hardest hit by Carter's austerity program had promised his members a show down with Carter. At a meeting of AFSCME officials two days earlier Wurf had stated, "I intend to let him ( Carter ) know in the clearest possible tones that if confrontation is necessary, we are quite prepared for it."

At the White House meeting, however, Wurf limited his confrontation to a polite request for "better communications and greater sensitivity" on the part of the Carter regime.



---Later in January "class warrior" Douglas Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers, gave unqualified endorsement to the wage insurance plank ( now dead ) of Carter's austerity program. Fraser promised his support for keeping auto workers' wage demands within the 7% limit, if the wage insurance bill was passed before auto negotiations begin in July. The wage insurance was supposed to insure workers' wages up to 10% inflation rate, if the workers voluntarily accepted the 7% limit. It did not, however, allow workers to keep up with inflation beyond 10%.



TWO "GOOD" MEN AND — BLIND.

---Throughout this period the only practical efforts by the AFL-CIO to pressure the Carter regime, were limited to attempts to embarrass Carter in the press. This amounted to a pathetic insistence by George Meany that mandatory controls replace the "voluntary" guidelines. Since mandatory controls administered by the government would be no more equitable than the present guidelines, the effort must be seen as a tactic to discredit Carter to gain leverage with the administration. The message to Carter was if the government delivered on legislation favorable to the union bureaucracy, Meany would go along with the austerity program.

---Citing the increasingly conservative composition of the new Congress, the AFL-CIO in late February announced it would work with the Carter regime for piecemeal gains rather than comprehensive labor law reforms.

---In April, the National Master Freight Agreement contract negotiated by the Teamsters gave Carter's guidelines their first major defeat. No thanks to Teamster leaders, who were willing to make a deal with the government. Rank-and-file pressure, however, forced the Teamster officials to back a wage settlement over the guidelines. As one Teamster official pointed out, if the Teamster negotiators had stayed within the guidelines, the Fitzsimmons regime "would lose 100 loyalists ", during the next local union elections.

---Following the breakthrough by the Teamster rank-and-file and another guideline breaking settlement by the airline mechanics, UAW president Douglas Fraser reversed himself once again. Clearly in fear of a rank-and-file backlash, Fraser announced that as far as the upcoming UAW negotiations were concerned, the "guidelines just don't exist."

---On July 30, inspite of signs of a restless rank-and-file, top officials of the Seafarers, the newly formed Food and Commercial Workers, the Brotherhood of Railway and Air-line Clerks, the Communications Workers, the Ladies Garment Workers, and the Clothing and Textile Workers endorsed Carter for reelection.

Faced with what has been called the most anti-labor regime since President Calvin Coolidge, the U.S. labor bureaucracy refuses to make a clean break with the government. The reason behind this is the integration of the unions into the government. Not



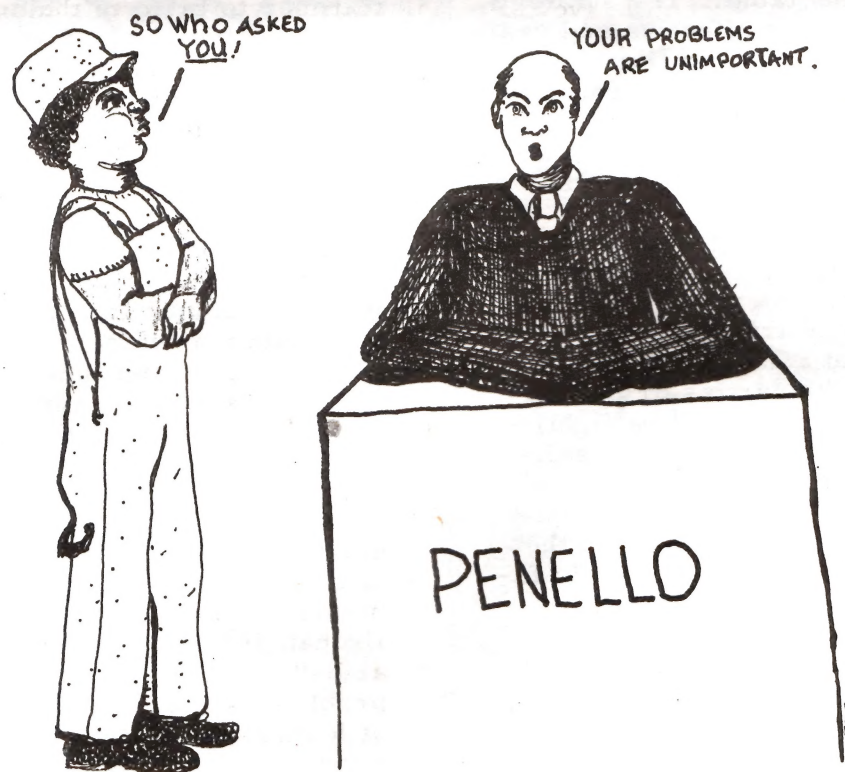
only do labor officials, like corporate executives, move back and forth between positions in the unions and government agencies, but daily affairs of the unions are so heavily regulated by the government that to antagonize the government seems to be reckless. The President's control over the National Labor Relations Board, his control over the internal democracy of the unions, and his clout within other branches of the government make him a formidable opponent indeed.

Yet it is the union movement itself which is greatly responsible for this sad state of affairs. What began at the turn of the century as an electoral policy of "rewarding our friends and punishing our enemies", more and more turned into a policy of actively seeking protective legislation for the unions. The problem was that once the State began to take over the functions of the labor movement, it meant the end of the union movement as an independent force under membership control. As a consequence the labor bureaucracy has developed its own version of "real politik" where it must kow-tow to the dictates of the regime in power, no matter how blatantly conservative. Unfortunately it is not the bureaucrats, but the workers who suffer when "Labor rewards its enemies."

#### Worker Grievances Trivial : Declares Labor Board Member

The NLRB dismissed a Postal worker's complaint that his boss ordered him back to work while he was filing a grievance. NLRB member John Penello criticized the fact that the case was processed to begin with. "I regret that innumerable staff hours and tens of thousands of dollars...were totally and utterly wasted in...this meaningless case," wrote Penello.

Penello's attitude confirms what we have said all along. Workers looking for the quick and economical settlement of grievances, should look to direct action rather than the courts or bureaucratic grievance machinery. Sit-downs help fight inflation.





# REBEL WORKERS & CONSERVATIVE UNIONS:

## A DEBATE

The following articles were sent to us in response to the question, "Should libertarian labor radicals try to transform the existing conservative unions into revolutionary unions through the election of rebel candidates to union office?"

Although the Self-Management Newsletter staff and most of our correspondents are highly skeptical of labor strategies calling for "boring from within", we felt the question could use some discussion. We contacted Tom Wetzel, a staff member of the Milwaukee syndicalist journal, Impulse, to explain why he was in favor of this strategy. Mike Hargis, a member of the Resurgence collective and frequent contributor to the Industrial Worker (Newspaper of the Industrial Workers of the World), was asked to argue for the opposing view. In order to give no advantage to either side, neither writer was permitted to read the other's article prior to printing both sides.

### Build Within Existing Unions!

by Tom Wetzel

What is the best strategy for revolutionary libertarians to adopt in nurturing the growth of a mass revolutionary workers' movement in America? There are certainly many possible strategies and it isn't obvious which is the best. It would perhaps be a good idea if I started by laying my cards on the table. The strategy that seems to me most effective and realistic for the present point in time is the idea of orienting ourselves towards the dissident rank and file movements in the existing unions, attempting to influence the opposition movement in a libertarian direction.

But there are a number of different perspectives that might be put forward for rank and file opposition work. The perspective that I would try to defend is the idea of independent rank and file groups, free from control by parties or bureaucratic factions; these should be fighting organizations, organizing against sell-outs and developing the possibilities of direct action, and chipping away at bureaucratic power in the unions. In the fight against the union hierarchy, I'd favor putting a vision of what should be, self-managed rank and file industrial bodies that take an out-and-out class struggle stance. And for the short term, you'd want to develop a program of concrete changes in the union to fight for now, leading toward that goal of unions without bureaucratic rulers.

(Continued on page 10)

### Build Shop-Floor Alternatives!

by Mike Hargis

The "Trade Union Question" has been a point of contention within the revolutionary movement in North America since the turn of the century. The fact that it has become a controversy within the anarchist movement in 1979 is an indication of the seriousness with which our movement is taking the need to bring our ideas back into the working class after decades of isolation.

As in the past the debate has emerged as "boring from within" versus dual unionism". The former concept is generally understood to mean working within the trade unions with an eye towards influencing them in a revolutionary direction, usually be gaining leadership positions. The latter idea is one of organizing revolutionary unions in opposition to the "official" labor movement.

It seems to me that "boring from within" is based on several misconceptions, the greatest of which is the idea that what is wrong with the trade unions is bad leadership. This ignores the entire question of consciousness. The trouble with the unions is not, primarily, the conservatism of the leadership but the willingness of the membership to play follow the leader. Exchanging conservatives for "revolutionaries" will not alter this situation. The problem is not to simply replace one set of leaders by another but to create a situation in which workers can do without a professional leadership.

Another false argument that the "borers" use is the myth that the trade unions



(Mike Hargis continued)

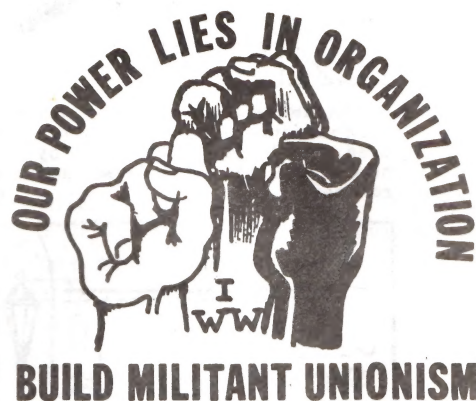
are "where the workers are at" and, therefore that is where we should be. First of all this is not strictly true. Only 20% of the U.S. workforce is unionized. That means that 80% aren't. What about the unorganized? What forms are they to organize into, the Teamsters, UAW, Steelworkers? Haven't these organizations broken enough strikes, cut enough deals, seized enough rebel locals to prove their antiworking class kernel? If we believe in self-organization and direct action we would be cutting our throats, and the throats of our fellow workers, to organize into these scabbie outfits, on the off chance that "our local" would be different.

Why not organize independent unions, or even the IWW? Because they don't have any power? Look, the power of any organization depends entirely on the willingness of its membership to struggle and their ability to generate solidarity. The power of the trade unions is a chimera. The bureaucrats have so alienated the rank-and-file from unionism that all they can do is make deals behind the workers backs. The proof is in the deteriorating working and living conditions of the working class. The only way to reverse this situation would be to unleash the militancy of the ranks. But this the bureaucrats will not do because they are afraid of the consequences.

The power of independent unions, or the IWW, also depends on this willingness to struggle and the generation of solidarity. But, unlike the trade unions, these organizations do not have a self-interested bureaucracy which would sabotage workers' struggles, and their democracy encourages initiative and direct action by the base.

But what about the 20% who are already in unions? Are we to abandon them to the reactionaries? Of course not. There are basically two ways of viewing the struggle in already organized work places. One is the classic "boring from within" strategy of forming electoral caucuses which contest for leadership in the union. This has the drawback of dividing the workers into hostile camps; those supporting the ins and those supporting the outs; and, while these two factions are duking it out, the boss is laughing all the way to the bank. On the other hand there is the strategy of building struggle caucuses on the shop floor to fight the employer. This has the advantage of focusing on the employer; uniting fellow workers in a common struggle; and forcing the labor fakirs to either do their job or expose themselves as pro-company. This strategy calls for building an organization on the shop floor that is "dual" to the official union. It is, in fact, an affirmation of unionism.

The "boring from within" versus "dual unionism" argument will, of course, only be resolved through practice. But the experience of the past three-quarters of the twentieth century should count for something. Socialists of all schools have been "boring from within" for most of this period and have only succeeded in turning the working class away from socialism, and thus aiding the bureaucrats to consolidate their power. Workers are not interested in being manipulated by this or that political faction in power fights. They want to fight the boss. "Boring from within" is a diversion; "dual unionism" an opportunity.





# THE BUILDING



The unimportant assistant architect who designs the building.

The unimportant inventor who invents machinery for drilling and excavating. (Usually dies in poverty.)

The unimportant person who does the excavating.



The unimportant people who lay the foundation after the stone has been quarried and transported by others just as unimportant and common.

The mere wage-earners who risk their life in mid-air with the steel girders, made by unimportant steel workers.

The person who carves the stone that gives beauty to the structure—just a humble laborer.—But—



The Owner—the Man Who Invested His Capital—He's IMPORTANT—in Fact, the Whole Cheese.

Drawn by Art Young for the Federated Press.



( Tom Wetzel continued )

Unlike the IWW, which was built on a centralist model, I could foresee the development over time of a de-centralized federation of rank and file opposition groups, with autonomy for the industry wide federations and the local shop groups. It would have to be de-centralized because the rank and filers in each union or industry would know best what's appropriate for their situation.



WAIT! LET US HAVE AN ARBITRATION  
CONFERENCE BEFORE WE PROCEED!

failed to carry out the wishes of the rank and file. Acting while the ranks were pissed off, the anarcho-syndicalists succeeded in setting up a whole new union that completely replaced the old one (this was in 1910). If it weren't for the previous work of the libertarians inside the old union and their campaign for changes, the new organization wouldn't have gotten rank and file support.

I would contrast the strategy that I have sketched above with the idea of forming a brand new labor federation, separate from the existing unions, with the objective of then "selling" this pre-formed union to the working class. This latter strategy is "universal dual unionism" and the IWW was built on the presupposition that this is the way to go. For over 50 years the libertarian left in the USA has fixated on the IWW model and this has built up an unhealthy orthodoxy, despite the fact that the last 40 years of trying have not led to the formation of any significant IWW unions. To join the IWW today is not to join a movement, but is either merely a political gesture or an exercise in nostalgia. The effectiveness of a strategy can be judged by its results. In 1934 the IWW had 30,000 members. In 1959 it had 150 members and isn't in much better shape today. If the libertarian left had dissolved the IWW "dual unions" into the CIO and re-organized themselves as a libertarian rank and file opposition, I believe that libertarianism would have been in a much better position to retain influence in the labor movement. Instead, they made themselves irrelevant. And, if IWW unions had survived, unless one is prepared to accept a mystical belief in "immaculate conception," who can say that IWW unions would not have degenerated in the post World War II period under the impact of the same social conditions that have conservatized and bureaucratized the CIO unions?

This strategy is not wedded to the existing unions. If the rank and file activists in a union reach a consensus that the bureaucrats have an unbreakable stranglehold and feel it is possible to dump that organization for a new one, there is nothing to prevent a rank and file group from organizing in that direction. However, this is not an eventuality that happens very often nor is it easy to get workers to agree to dump an existing union--as the complete failure of the IWW to raid any existing union shows. Moreover, an existing union organization could probably only be supplanted by some new organization if the new organization is an outgrowth of a strongly-developed rank and file opposition movement in that union. An example of this would be the anarcho-syndicalist opposition to the social-democratic bureaucracy in the French Railway Union. The rank and file had been organized behind an anarcho-syndicalist effort to decentralize the union and take power away from the National Executive Board and approved the proposed changes overwhelmingly. But, then, the executives



( Tom Wetzel continued )

When I make these criticisms of IWW "dual unionism", I sometimes get the reply: "Look, Tom, your idea of the IWW is out of date. Many Wobblies are working in the existing unions or in caucuses." But what does their membership in the IWW do for them? Since the IWW is organized as a union, it can't function as a rank and file federation. In the last of the IWW Internal Bulletin, it is reported that Rich Christopher has resigned from the IWW Executive Board because the IWW has "no coherent strategy for work in the existing unions." Rich is absolutely correct.

Some people who have been more in touch with social reality lately than orthodox Wobblism have concluded that there has developed a "wildcat movement" of spontaneous worker rebellion and that we should nurture this movement. But wildcat strikes are an event, not a "movement." They have no common principle or objective or organizational expression; nor are people in one wildcat aware of other wildcatters. There are many events that are responses of workers to their oppression --from absenteeism to wildcats to bar fights--and they don't become a "movement" just because they are an expression of resistance. If wildcat strikes were a "movement," bar fights would also, because they are also a response to oppression at work. You get off work and feel like punching someone out, but if you smashed your foreman--which is what you'd really like to do--, you'd lose your job. So you pick a fight in a bar.

From coast to coast there are hundreds of local dissident rank and file groups. These groups have often developed out of wildcat strikes or other situations that have brought the ranks into conflict with the higher-ups. In 1976, for example, there was a wildcat strike of the truckers at Schneider Transport, based in Green Bay. A rank and file network has evolved in the last two years among the drivers that had its origins in that strike. The network is centered around "Scoop," a newsletter instituted after the wildcat. The amount of support it has gotten from the drivers is shown by the fact that they have contributed \$8000, which enables the newsletter to run an office, staffed by the "Drivers' Auxiliary," made up of drivers' spouses. Because the Schneider drivers were so well organized, they were prepared to go out on strike March 31, when the National Master Freight Agreement expired, no matter whether "authorized" or not. On the other hand, an organizer of "Scoop" and Green Bay Teamsters for a Democratic Union, Phyllis Carpenter, was cautioning some small groups of drivers not to wildcat on March 31 (unless other people went out as well) precisely because they didn't have the well-oiled network the Schneider drivers had developed. They might suffer disastrous isolation ( as happened to the recent postal wildcatters ). The problem of isolation points a limitation on pure "spontaneity" and "informal work groups."

Rank and file groups differ quite a bit. Some are controlled by Leninist groups, some aren't. Some are merely temporary electoral coalitions formed to elect certain people to office, like "Steelworkers Fightback," while other groups are more cohesive and oriented to mobilizing the rank and file to defend their interests, like the "Unity Caucus" in the OCAW local at Arco's Long Beach (CA) refinery or the "Alliance of the Rank and File" in Local 2 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union in San Francisco. While some workers are of the opinion that the way to straighten out their union is to elect a "tough" or "progressive" Leader-- a new Jimmy Hoffa, say, there is a trend away from this idea and a growing awareness that the hierarchical structure of the unions is part of the problem. A member of "The Rank and File of Local 998" --the rank and file group in the bus drivers' union in Milwaukee--recently remarked to me that it wasn't enough to just replace the sell-out president of the local; they are proposing to take away from the president the control he presently exercises over negotiations and grievances and put it in the hands of rank and file committees. Libertarians active in the rank and file movement would want to encourage this trend

As anarcho-syndicalists, we can't go along with the idea changing the labor movement could be done merely by changing the faces in office. An essential part of the problem is the existence of a class of professional union managers with interests apart from the ranks. This bureaucracy would have to be eliminated to have a self-



( Tom Wetzel continued )

managing industrial movement, and this could only be done by the revolutionary transformation of the labor movement from below by an autonomous rank and file movement.

I know that some people don't think the unions could be transformed, even if social conditions change. Unless someone is in possession of a crystal ball and has a direct shot into the future, however, I don't see how they could know this. And, in any event, the objection really misses the point. A strategy should be chosen if it looks like the best option for effectively building up a libertarian workers' movement, under the existing conditions of the time. For an illustration of what I'm talking about, check out Bob Holton's British Syndicalism. In the pre-World War I radical labor upsurge in Britain most British anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists did not go the IWW "dual union" route but grouped themselves around The Voice if Labour, which took the sort of position that I have been defending. They were part of a larger British syndicalist movement--the rank and file movement of the time--and Holton shows how much more effective this movement was--in developing a militant mass movement for direct action and against the bureaucrats--than was the IWW's dual unionism.

(Note: The author invites correspondence and comments. You can write to him at 1317 East Albion Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202)

#### POSTSCRIPT: DRIVERS FIRED IN SCHNEIDER WILDCAT

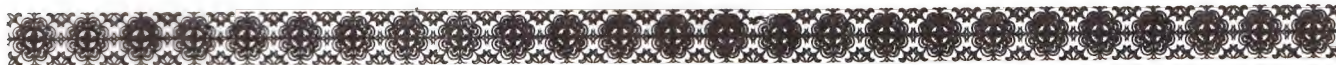
In my article I mentioned that the Schneider drivers organized around the rank and file paper "Scoop", were prepared to go out on strike when the National Master Freight Agreement expired on March 31. As it turned out, they didn't go out on a wildcat strike till April 28, when it became clear they were being sold out ( they were getting a three year pay freeze). The wildcat lasted till May 7. Although they were covered by the same supplement as the steel haulers (despite the fact they don't haul steel), the Schneider drivers worked throughout the successful steelhaulers wildcat and only went out after the steelhaulers strike ended.

The company was apparently waiting for a job action because injunctions against the strike here in Wisconsin and elsewhere were issued right away and scabs were escorted for hundreds of miles.

The "Scoop" rank and file office in Green Bay, where I had sat talking to members of the "Drivers Auxillary" a few weeks earlier, was broken into. Company executives broke a hole in the wall and then proceeded to rough up the two daughters of Claude and Phylis Carpenter.

Claude Carpenter, a shop steward and trustee of Teamsters Local 75, elected on a TDU slate a year and a half ago, was fired as were the husbands of his two daughters and many other drivers.

In 1976 the Schneider drivers wildcatted and fought the company to a stalemate, but thi time, as the TDU paper Convoy commented, "Roy Williams and the other union negotiators had done their dirty work and the rank and file were not well enough organized to fight the terror that hit them."





# THE STEEL HAULERS' REVOLT

By Jeff Stein

## Part 1:

### LESSONS OF THE F.A.S.H. STRIKE

The steel haulers have good reasons for wanting their own union. About one third of the 30,000 drivers that deliver steel products for the U.S. steel companies are legally "represented" by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Most of these drivers are independent owner-operators who work for trucking firms and receive a fixed percentage of the freight bill charged to the steel companies. This percentage, as well as other details of the relationship between the owner-operators and the companies, is part of a steel hauler's supplement to the trucking industry-wide, National Master Freight Agreement. Unfortunately the steel haulers have little control over the negotiation of these supplements. The steel haulers have no separate vote on their own contracts but must go along with the industry-wide settlement.

As owner-operators, drivers that hire out their rigs and services to the trucking companies, the steel haulers have many problems that are different from other Teamster drivers. Owner-operators have to pay their own fuel costs, highway taxes, insurance, license and permit fees, as well as maintain their trucks in accordance with safety regulations that vary widely from state to state. All of these operating costs must come out of the percentage the drivers receive from the companies. Various job rights, like a limited number of working hours, simply don't exist. Many of the drivers must put in 70-hour work weeks just to keep up the loan payments on their trucks. It's no surprise that a large percentage of the drivers go under each year. To add insult to injury, during the last Teamster-negotiated Master Freight Agreement, the percentage of the freight charge that goes to the drivers declined from 75 percent to less than 72 percent.

The steel haulers have been fighting bureaucratic sell outs since 1967. After attempts at getting a separate Teamster local for steel haulers failed, some of the drivers formed their own union, the Fraternal Association of Steel Haulers. FASH, whose membership has fluctuated over the period from a few hundred to as many as 5,000 drivers, attempted on at least two previous occasions (1970 and 1976) to get the U.S. National Labor Relations Board to hold decertification elections at the Teamster represented steel hauling companies. Both times the NLRB refused their peti-





( Steel Haulers continued)

tions on the grounds that owner-operators perform essentially the same duties as over the road drivers that are company employees. As it became obvious that neither the trucking companies, the Teamster officials, nor the government wanted the steel haulers to have their own union, FASH tried to force the issue through strikes. The steel haulers struck for union autonomy in 1967, 1970, and 1971. Although each of these strikes won several improvements in economic benefits and working conditions, and succeeded in getting FASH recognition by some non-union trucking companies, the strikes failed to win independence from the Teamsters. On November 11, 1978 the steel haulers were ready for another try.

#### The 1978-79 Strike

The strike got off to a slow start on the weekend of November 11th and 12th. The principal demand, as with previous FASH strikes, was the decertification of the Teamsters union and the holding of recognition elections to allow steel haulers to choose between FASH or any other union. In addition to the decertification, the steel haulers wanted federal standards on truck lengths and load weights, instead of being determined on a state by state basis. Overweight trucks are often forced to unload part of their steel at state lines and return for the rest of the load after reaching their destination. The steel haulers also wanted a U.S. license plate to cut down on the time and expense of getting plates from several states, a return to the old 75%-25% split with the trucking companies, and an end to unnecessary tarping of steel loads. Since some of the demands were beyond the control of the trucking companies and would require action by Congress, the Interstate Commerce Commission ( which regulates the trucking industry), and the National Labor Relations Board, the steel haulers were in effect striking against the government. By stopping steel deliveries, it was hoped that the steel companies would pressure either the trucking companies or the government to deal with FASH.

The response of Teamster officials to the strike was not unexpected. Thomas Fagan, president of Teamsters Joint Council 40 (western Pennsylvania) vowed to break the FASH strike. Accordingly, Fagan sent Teamster goons to U.S. Steel Corporation's Irvin works near Pittsburgh to help steel trucks cross FASH picket lines. The principal Teamster reform caucus, Teamsters for a Democratic Union, also condemned the steel haulers for their "dual unionism". While expressing public sympathy for the plight of the steel haulers, TDU refused to support their demand for an independent union. In an official statement issued by TDU on the eve of the strike, the TDU leadership declared that, "TDU is working toward a united stand of all Teamster freight haulers, special commodity haulers, steel haulers in this coming contract fight, and in the fight to reform our union. Therefore we will not back any demand to pull out of the Teamsters Union by one section of the drivers. But we understand the sentiments of steel haulers who are fighting to control their own destiny. We call upon the General Executive Board to grant steel haulers the right to vote separately on their own contract, and to democratically choose their own Teamster negotiators for their contract." ( Convoy, November 1978) --my emphasis

In spite of the opposition by other drivers' organizations, the strike began to pick up steam at the beginning of the work week. FASH members used Citizen Band radios to ask more steel haulers to pull off the road in sympathy. As a warning to scabs, individual FASH members began to shoot at steel rigs and toss bricks from overpasses in an attempt to disable the trucks. Although FASH as a whole did not officially condone such acts, many rank and file strikers felt they had little alternative in the face of local police and Teamster goons breaking up picket lines. Many scab drivers could take the hint and began to stay off the highways. By the end of the first week of the strike, the steel companies (who had earlier scoffed at the FASH threat) began to complain that stockpiles were growing to the point where they would have to slow down production.



( Steel Haulers continued )

Meanwhile the government was beginning to mobilize against FASH. On Thursday, November 16th, Teamsters president Frank Fitzsimmons met with U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell to ask for government assistance in ending the strike. Bell dispatched U.S. Attorneys and F.B.I. agents to "investigate violence". At several steel plants throughout Ohio and Pennsylvania, local judges issued injunctions to breakup FASH picket lines. In the second week of the strike, a federal judge in Ohio issued a restraining order barring strikers from interfering with steel shipments.

The rebel steel haulers responded to the government intervention with guerilla hit and run tactics. Mobile columns of pickets would force scab trucks off the road and disable the trucks. Other targets included steel rigs parked at truckstops. Tires were slashed, windows broken, and scab drivers pulled from their cabs and beaten up. Unfortunately the capitalist press played the more violent incidents for all they were worth. The media failed to point out that with bans on picketting and massive police intervention on the side of the steel and truck companies and the Teamster bureaucrats, many desperate strikers turned to what seemed the only effective tactics.

Although the press coverage of violence did little to win public sympathy for the strikers, it did encourage scab drivers to leave the road. By the end of November drivers would only move steel if given police escort. Convoys of ten or more trucks were formed with the assistance of state police at truck stops. Local police and FBI agents began to stake out the truck stops. Yet even these measures could not prevent steel deliveries from dropping off. At the end of the first month of the strike various steel manufacturers were reporting that steel shipments were down as much as 20%. Since this figure took into account steel shipments by rail and water, the percentage of truck deliveries that had dropped off was even higher.

Clearly this was a situation that could not be allowed to go on indefinitely. The NLRB and the U.S. Labor Department, however, remained unsympathetic to the steel hauler demands. The Carter administration was wooing the support of Teamster president Frank Fitzsimmons to keep the upcoming Teamster contract within the "voluntary" 7 percent wage limit. To concede to FASH decertification demands would not only anger the Teamster bureaucracy, but encourage dissidents within the union. It is this dissidence which would have to be dampened if Teamster bureaucrats were to be able to force a bad contract on the Teamster freight haulers. As a writer in the Chicago Sun Times noted, "Militance on the part of FASH and other dissident organizations could force Fitzsimmon's hand."

The labor relations arm of the government may have been content to starve out the FASH strikers, but this wasn't good enough for the steel companies. The steel companies had no more desire to see a militant union like FASH replace the Teamsters than did the government. Yet with millions of dollars in profits at stake, the companies could not play a waiting game.

On December 1st, seven steel companies including U.S. Steel Corporation, Jones and Laughlin Steel Corp., Wheeling Pittsburgh Steel Corp., National Steel Corp., and Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co., filed a \$1 million damage suit against FASH. The

## GOVERNMENT DOUBLE TALK

The  
Steel  
Haulers  
are  
workers  
that  
perform  
the same  
duties  
as  
regular  
drivers!



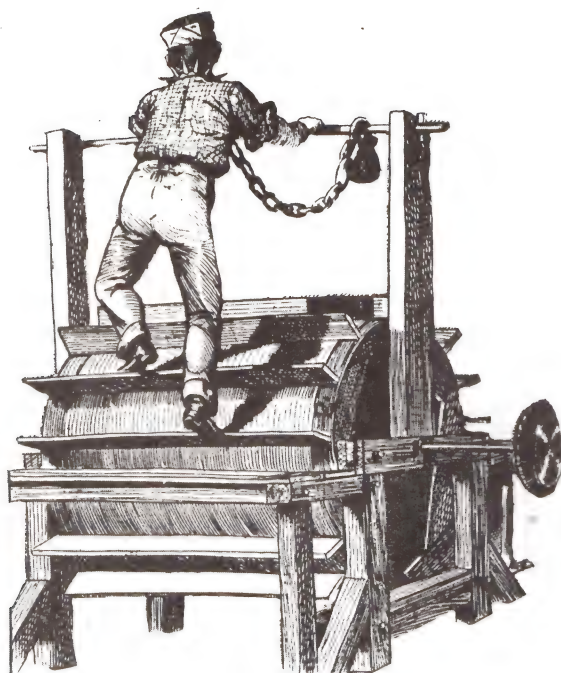
The  
Steel  
Haulers  
are not  
workers  
but  
independent  
businessmen!  
They are  
not protected  
by labor  
laws.

NLRB

COURT



( Steel Haulers continued )



companies claimed that FASH members were violating a 1971 federal anti-trust injunction, which had decreed that as "owner-operators" FASH members were independent businessmen and not workers ( and thus were not exempt from the Sherman Anti-Trust Act).

As court matters were drawing the strike to a climax, FASH won its major gains of the strike. In mid-December FASH representatives met with the Interstate Commerce Commission to discuss the problems of the steel haulers. The Commission agreed to set new regulations that would require full disclosure of the freight bills be made to the owner-operators. This would stop the practice of "skimming" in which several dishonest companies would take a secret cut from the freight charge before figuring the percentage paid to the driver. Also the Commission would require that the allocation of fuel costs, permit and license fees, and insurance be spelled out in the agreement between the driver and the trucking company. Not surprisingly, the ICC declined to set standards for dividing costs between drivers and trucking companies.

By January 10th, the U.S. District Court in Pittsburgh had ruled in favor of the steel companies that FASH had violated the 1971 injunction. FASH representatives had argued that since it already had labor contracts with four non-Teamster trucking firms, FASH could no longer be considered an association of businessmen. The judge sidestepped the issue by exempting the drivers from these companies from the injunction. As for the rest of the steel haulers, the judge gave FASH 48 hours to end the strike or he would have FASH chairman William Hill, vice-president Robert Trent and 17 other FASH members arrested. The judge had been preparing the order since December 22, but it had taken about three weeks for the police and FBI agents to identify which drivers had also been active in 1971. The court also demanded a complete membership roster, so the injunction could be extended to all of the approximately 5,000 FASH members. An attempt made by FASH to stay the order until an appeal could be made was denied.

Two months is a long time to be on strike, especially for drivers that risk losing their means of livelihood, their trucks, for getting behind in the payments. Faced with losing their rigs and mass arrests, many steel haulers were going back to work. Only the Pittsburgh area strongholds were standing fast. At general membership meetings several FASH locals voted to continue the strike and defy the court. Although gains in eliminating unnecessary tarping of loads had been made with the companies, and the decertification demand had clearly been lost for now, there was still the need to win reinstatement for fired strikers. FASH attempted to delay the court order by interpreting it as merely an order against obstructing steel deliveries. The decision was made to stop picketting but to not return to work. The following day the court again demanded a return to work. At a subsequent membership meeting, the steel haulers politely listened to FASH chairman Hill relay the court message. Hill and other FASH officers were asked to leave the room ( to absolve them of legal responsibility ), and 350 drivers again voted to remain on strike.



( Steel Haulers continued )

The steel companies were having fits. They wanted FASH to be fined and placed under court trusteeship. They wanted to have any steel hauler that publicly advocated staying on strike, to be arrested. The federal court gave FASH one last chance to end the strike or face arrests and heavy fines. The judge promised to help get the fired strikers' jobs back. A few hours later, on January 18, a week after the court injunction, the last 300 steel hauler militants voted to return to work.

Another strike was over for FASH. Gains had been made, but the steel haulers are no closer to their decertification goal than before. What can be learned from their experiences?

### The Government is Not a Force for Worker's Rights

Three times a group of dissident steel haulers have applied to the National Labor Relations Board to hold elections to decertify the Teamsters. Each time the government has denied the FASH petitions on the grounds that independent drivers perform the same tasks as regular drivers. Obviously the mere desires of workers to negotiate their own contracts and choose their own negotiators, take second place to management needs for labor stability. To insure this need is met, the federal courts have been used against the steel haulers on the bogus grounds that independent drivers are "businessmen" not workers ( then why are they represented by the Teamsters?). Yet the Interstate Commerce Commission prevents the steel haulers from directly contracting with the steel companies and forces them to sell their services to the trucking companies instead.

The reasons behind this situation are at the same time political and economic. The government needs the political support of powerful corporate and union bureaucracies in order to implement its policies, in this case the Carter austerity program. What is not always obvious is that, like the corporations, the government also has economic interests. In order to provide its legions of politicians, patronage workers, generals, and bureaucrats with economic privileges, and finance its programs, the government depends on a smooth functioning economy to tax. The State has no more desire for a rebellious labor force than its capitalist allies. A bureaucratic union movement is a keystone in the government's economic strategy.

FASH, in spite of these handicaps, has shown in its 12 year history, that a union can survive without government recognition. Because of its semi-illegal status, it has not been subject to the bureaucratizing influences of the government. With no dues check-off, FASH must depend on the voluntary commitment of its members. The union's strike decisions are made by membership assemblies. Its officers, although turn-over in official positions is low, are ill-paid and not overly powerful. FASH should not be idealized, since an organization that has had to resort often to violent tactics against fellow workers ( usually scabs ) must surely start to lose its democratic character even among its own supporters. Yet even in this negative way, the state repression of FASH must bear a good deal of blame.

### Industry-Wide Contracts are an Obstacle to Militancy

The main goal of FASH has been to break the strangle hold the National Master Freight Agreement has on the steel haulers. Steel haulers want to negotiate their own agreements instead of being included as a supplement to the industry-wide contract. Steel haulers have problems peculiar to their branch of the industry which are ignored in the shuffle of the general freight bargaining. The ability to vote in the NMFA is no safeguard against having poor steel supplements approved by an industry-wide Teamster membership, the majority of which are not concerned about steel hauling. Only decentralized bargaining can meet the steel haulers' needs.

The trucking industry is not the only industry where militant minorities with special



( Steel Haulers continued )

problems have been stifled with industry-wide bargaining. The past few years have seen wildcats sparked by the iron ore miners of the United Steel Workers, and conflicts erupt over the needs of urban postal workers as contrasted to the needs of rural postal workers. The corporations and the government promote large bargaining units because they know it helps to dampen militancy.

#### Need for Rebel Solidarity Limited by Union Reformism

The principal stumbling block in FASH's campaign to decertify the Teamsters, has been its inability to really cripple steel deliveries for any length of time. Although some smaller steel companies that could not switch deliveries to rail or boats were almost completely shut down, the larger corporations were only slowed down 15-20%. The steel industry was just not hurt bad enough to put any pressure on the government. The only weapon which could have stopped the court injunction was a sympathy strike by other drivers. Attempts by FASH to enlist the support of other independents were unsuccessful. The only other group in the trucking industry that might have supported FASH were other dissident Teamsters, like TDU. Had TDU supported the steel haulers with sympathy shut downs, the government might have been forced to concede to FASH demands to head off a TDU-FASH coalition. At the same time, a successful break-away could have only stimulated militancy in the rest of the Teamster rank and file. Was it mere trade union dogmatism that prompted TDU to condemn the FASH strike?



Andrew Ewen

Dogmatic notions about "dual unionism" were undoubtedly part of the reason. Next to spitting on the flag, or insulting mom and apple pie, there is no greater sin in the eyes of union leaders than that of "dual unionism". It is ironic that such an epithet would be used by supposed union dissidents, since in Frank Fitzsimmons eyes, TDU is made up of "dual unionists" too. Perhaps this is revealing about the nature of TDU.

As an electoral caucus, whose goal is to gain control of the bureaucratic structure, TDU seeks to mobilize all the dissatisfaction within the Teamsters behind TDU's electoral goals. TDU discourages direct action by union members unless it is under TDU control. Class-wide solidarity takes second place to political maneuvering. Although the caucus claims that it will seek decentralized bargaining for the steel haulers, its insistence that steel hauler negotiators must be Teamster negotiators, raises real questions about TDU's sincerity. The support given for bargaining autonomy may be more a matter of seizing upon the issue as a political opportunity.

#### Owner-Operators and Self-Management

There has been a trend lately in the trucking industry towards more owner-operators. The reason behind this trend is a concerted effort on the part of the Interstate Commerce Commission and some trucking companies to encourage the employment of owner-operators. The intention is to hold down trucking expenses by relieving the trucking companies of the expense of keeping a large fleet of trucks available at all times. By hiring owner-operators, the expenses for fuel, maintenance, insurance, loans, etc., can be passed on to the drivers. Furthermore the companies have no obligations to keep owner-operators on the payroll during slack periods. Unable to deal with truck-customers directly due to federal law, the owner-operators are a captive work force, exploited by the government, the trucking companies, the large shippers and the banks.



( Steel Haulers continued )

The Teamsters union has done little if anything to resist this trend. As long as the particular company continues to send in the checked-off union dues, the decline in conditions is accepted. All too many Teamster locals are willing to make special allowances for "hard-pressed companies".

The one bright spot in this picture has been the growing awareness of the independent drivers themselves. In 1974 and 1979, owner-operators across the U.S. rebelled against soaring costs and shortages of diesel fuel. FASH members took part in those struggles too. The very fact that FASH, a union of independent drivers, was formed, attests to a vague but growing sense of working class consciousness. In spite of what the steel companies, the government and the press might tell them about being "independent businessmen", the steel haulers are beginning to see that they are just workers that happen to own their own tools.

Ironically, the ICC may have unintentionally fostered conditions that will promote a desire for self-management in the trucking industry. The increase in the number of independent drivers means that the management of the trucking companies has been reduced to the routine matters of doing business and dispatching drivers. The profit of the companies is more obviously parasitic. The administration of the companies could be easily replaced by drivers themselves, who could dispatch the vehicles themselves. Another improvement would be to relieve the individual drivers of their financial burdens by co-operative financing of trucks. This would be a starting point of a struggle against the banks. The main obstacle to greater self-management, however, is the ICC and the rest of the government. The ICC protects the interests of the large truckers and can be expected to try to prevent any moves towards co-operative transportation. The government and the corporations are united in their desire to lower transportation costs at the workers' expense. The future of self-management in the trucking industry will depend on whether the independents can widen their struggle to include regular drivers and rebel workers in other industries. Only a working class united in free solidarity can be any match for the power of the State.

A confrontation near Morrisville, Pa.







TAKING THE "BLOCK" OUT OF "BLOCKHEAD."



## STEEL HAULERS WILDCAT AT CONTRACT TIME

Only three months after the FASH strike ended, another steel hauler wildcat was rippling through the midwest. Picking up on the same issues as previous wildcats ( the need for greater bargaining autonomy and the return of the 3% of hauling fees lost during the last contract ), TDU steel hauling locals in Ohio and western Pennsylvania walked out at the end of the trucking industry-wide strike and lockout. The move was well timed. Most of the steel companies had not shipped any steel since April 1st when the Teamster contract expired. When the steel haulers failed to return with the rest of the Teamsters on April 10th, or walked out again after only a day or two, the steel companies already had a couple weeks of production in stockpiles. The impact of the wildcat was felt right away. With no room to stockpile the new steel, production had to cut back immediately.

What began as a relatively small affair had rapidly spread across Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Although TDU organizers played a significant role in starting the strike, Teamster steel haulers rallied to support the strike in many areas where TDU had little or no influence. The most popular demand was that the Iron and Steel Supplement to the National Master Freight Agreement should be ratified by a separate vote. This demand for some bargaining autonomy gained the enthusiastic support of many FASH members. While FASH did not "officially" endorse the TDU wildcat for fear of further court repression, it did not condemn the strike either. This factor played a part in winning support for the strike.

Confronted with the danger of a widespread rebellion and further delays in negotiating the National Master Freight Agreement, Teamster president Fitzsimmons began to look for ways to co-opt the strike. When the wildcat first spread, Teamster officials had condemned it as an "unauthorized walkout". On April 18th, only two days later, Teamster leaders announced that they were prepared to give official sanction to the strikers' wage goals. Clearly the intent was to try to buy off the wildcaters without giving in to the demand for greater bargaining autonomy.



TDU leaders at first rather naively cited Fitzsimmons' promises as a "great victory". Kenneth Paff, a TDU organizer was quoted as saying that official Teamster backing would make it "much more possible for strikers to win their demands. This will have the effect of shortening the strike."

Of course that would have been true if the Teamster officials had been actually supporting the strikers' demands. Fitzsimmons, however, was supporting the strike in order to side step the demands.

Fitzsimmons took personal charge of the steel hauler negotiations while instructing local officials to order the drivers back to work. Unfortunately for the Teamster officials, the steel haulers had long experiences with leaving matters in the hands of bureaucrats. Rank and file steel haulers packed the union halls of several large locals, jeering as Teamster officials gave the back to work order. Local officials were helpless to enforce Fitzsimmons' instructions. The president of Detroit's Local 124 said that although he thought the drivers should return, "nobody is stupid enough to go out there to force these drivers to get back on the road."

After so many years of ignoring steel hauler problems, a simple wage increase would

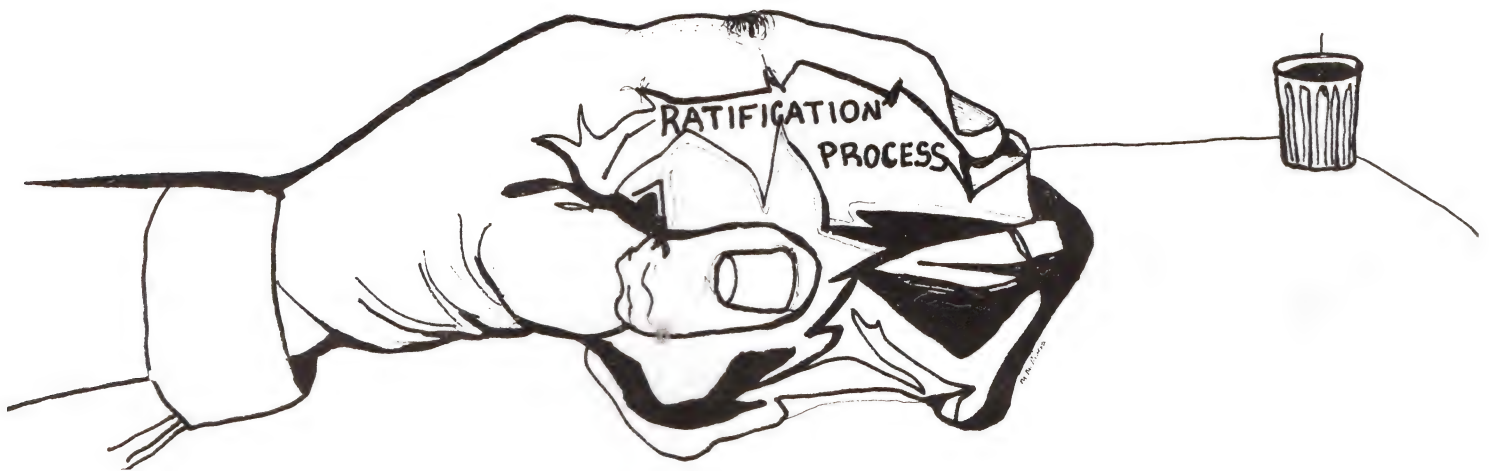


( Teamster Wildcat continued )

not satisfy the rebels. Teamster bureaucrats decided to make a concession in the area of a separate contract vote. It was announced that steel hauling members would receive green envelopes for their NMFA ballots, so that a separate tally of their votes could be made. The Iron and Steel Supplement, however, remained part of the National Master Freight Agreement. This meant that both steel haulers and non-steel haulers would be voting on each others contract as usual. This raised the question of whether the separate tally was merely to be a straw poll or whether the steel haulers could actually reject the Iron and Steel Supplement if the overall agreement was ratified.

Rebel steel haulers refused to go along with such a vague proposal. Major steel hauling locals in Pittsburgh, Youngstown, and Canton rejected the tentative pact. The same sort of running guerilla war between state police and rebel drivers that had taken place during the FASH strike began to reappear. Once more police escorted convoys of scab steel haulers on the highways, while court injunctions were used against rebel pickets. Although the Teamster officials had by now approved a limited strike against the hold-out National Steel Carriers Assn. ( who had refused to grant the increased driver percentage ), there was little practical support given by the officials to the picket lines. Continued job actions against the rest of the trucking industry were still condemned as "unauthorized".

The bureaucratic three prong maneuver against the wildcat ( 1. emphasize wage demands, 2. grant only a symbolic separate vote count, 3. authorize a partial strike against the National Steel Carriers Assn. ) finally took effect near the end of April. As individual companies began to defect from the NSCA and sign separate contracts agreeing to the wage demands, support for the strike dwindled. On Sunday, April 29, the last Teamster locals on strike voted to return to work. When the results of the contract vote were announced on May 20, the National Master Freight Agreement was ratified by a three to one margin. The symbolic separate count of steel hauler ballots was 5,899 to 2,324 in favor. The three week wildcat sparked by TDU had won some extra wage gains but had failed to win bargaining autonomy.



What comparisons can be made between the FASH strike and the TDU wildcat? Both organizations failed to win any lasting bargaining autonomy separate from the National Master Freight Agreement. The FASH strike failed due to its isolation and government repression. The TDU strike failed because it was outmaneuvered by Frank Fitzsimmons and the Teamster bureaucracy. Both organizations seem to have shown their own peculiar strengths and weaknesses.

FASH, by staking out an independent existence, alienated the more conservative



( Teamster Wildcat continued )



and moderate Teamster drivers. This fact, combined with the timing of the FASH strike, meant that barely half of the steel haulers supported the strike. The strike was launched five months prior to the expiration of the National Master Freight Agreement. Therefore it failed to take advantage of the rank and file unrest that usually builds up around contract time. With contract negotiations several months away, the Teamster officials and the trucking companies could afford to sit back and let the federal courts crush the strike.

TDU, much to its credit, took into account the possibilities that exist at the end of a contract. By wildcatting after the industry-wide shut-down, tremendous pressure was applied to the steel industry and the steel trucking companies. The one drawback to this tactic, however, was that by wildcatting while contract talks were still in progress, it was easier for union officials to take over. In the midst of negotiations, union officials are not legally bound by the old contract so they are free to wiggle around rebel demands. Usually this means that the bureaucrats will take the initiative and renegotiate the wage settlement, while ignoring worker control issues. For labor radicals interested in restructuring the power relations in industry and the labor movement, the massive rank and file support achieved by wildcatting at contract time can sometimes be misleading. Conservative workers ( who wouldn't dream of striking in the middle of a contract ) will probably desert at the earliest sign of wage concessions.

TDU, in part due to its electoral goals, seems to overly accomodate this conservative element. Direct action and rank and file initiative is usually discouraged unless under TDU control. Ironically much of the support for the TDU wildcat came from drivers who weren't TDU members. The importance of direct action in winning support for any rebel movement was shown by this strike. Steel hauler membership in TDU prior to the wildcat had been small. During the wildcat, however, TDU literature co-ordinator William Denney reported that TDU was "signing up 100 new members a week." TDU had so underestimated the organizing potential of direct action that it was two weeks into the strike before a national chairman for the TDU Steel Haulers Organizing Committee had been selected. The wildcat gained more support for TDU among steel haulers than had its previous electoral campaigns.

Whether this lesson will be learned by the TDU leadership is questionable. At the



( Teamster Wildcat continued )

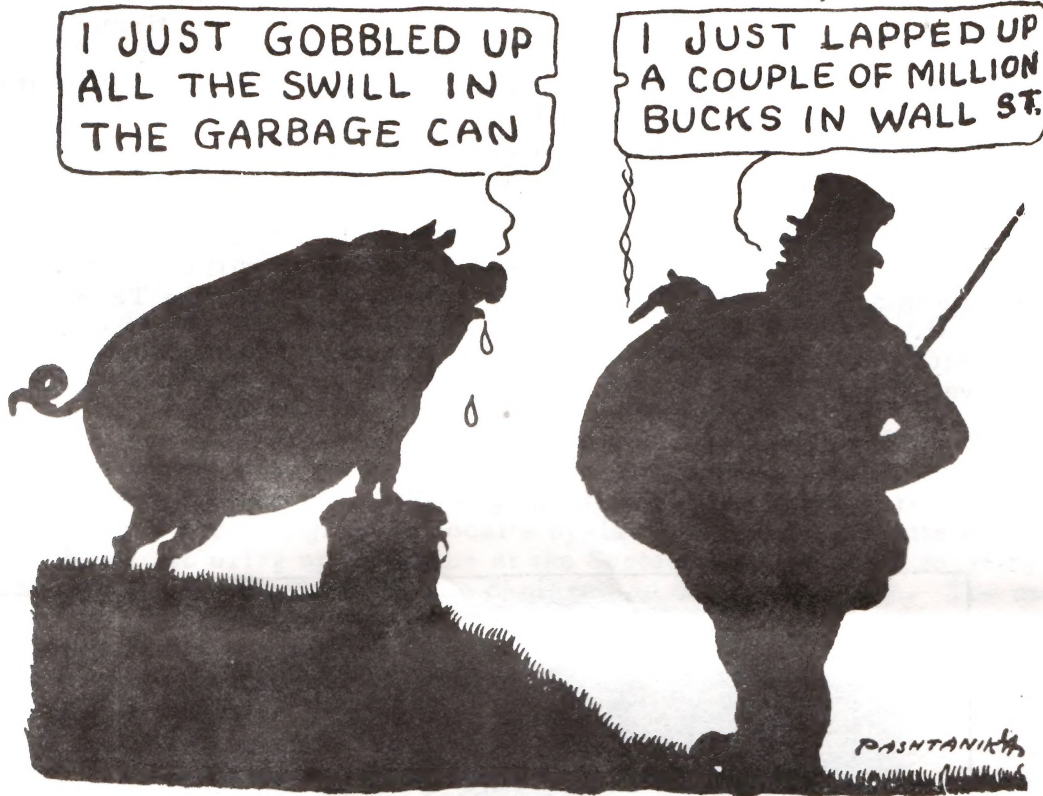
collapse of the wildcat, supporters were told to go back and "apply pressure within the union" ( ie. follow union legal procedures ). Ultimately this strategy leaves matters in the hands of union bureaucrats. Even had a seperate vote been won, the enforcement of the contract would still be in the hands of bureaucrats, not the rank and file. Over the past few years Teamsters have won impressive union benefits at contract time, only to see these benefits go unenforced against "ailing firms". It must be remembered that the steel hauler driver percentage declined from 75% to 72% during the course of the last contract not at the beginning. What good does it do to have rank and file contract ratification, if later the contract enforcement is left entirely up to union leaders in bed with the employers?

FASH, for all its shortcomings, has the advantage in this area. As an independent union not tied to the Teamster structure, it has the potential for real membership control. Contracts and their enforcement could be handled by steel haulers, not professional Teamster leaders. The future of FASH, however, will depend on whether it can learn something from the TDU wildcat, to recognize when the Teamster officials are weakest. A strike one month prior to Teamster negotiations might have had a better effect. At any rate, FASH will have to broaden its base of support if it has hopes of ever successfully confronting its number one enemy, the U.S. government.





## A STUDY IN RELATIVITY



"WHO'S WHO AND WHY"

ACQUISITIVENESS—THE CHIEF INCENTIVE UNDER CAPITALISM.

### BE A SELF-MANAGEMENT SUPPORTER

Suggested Donation: \$5

I can afford to donate more :

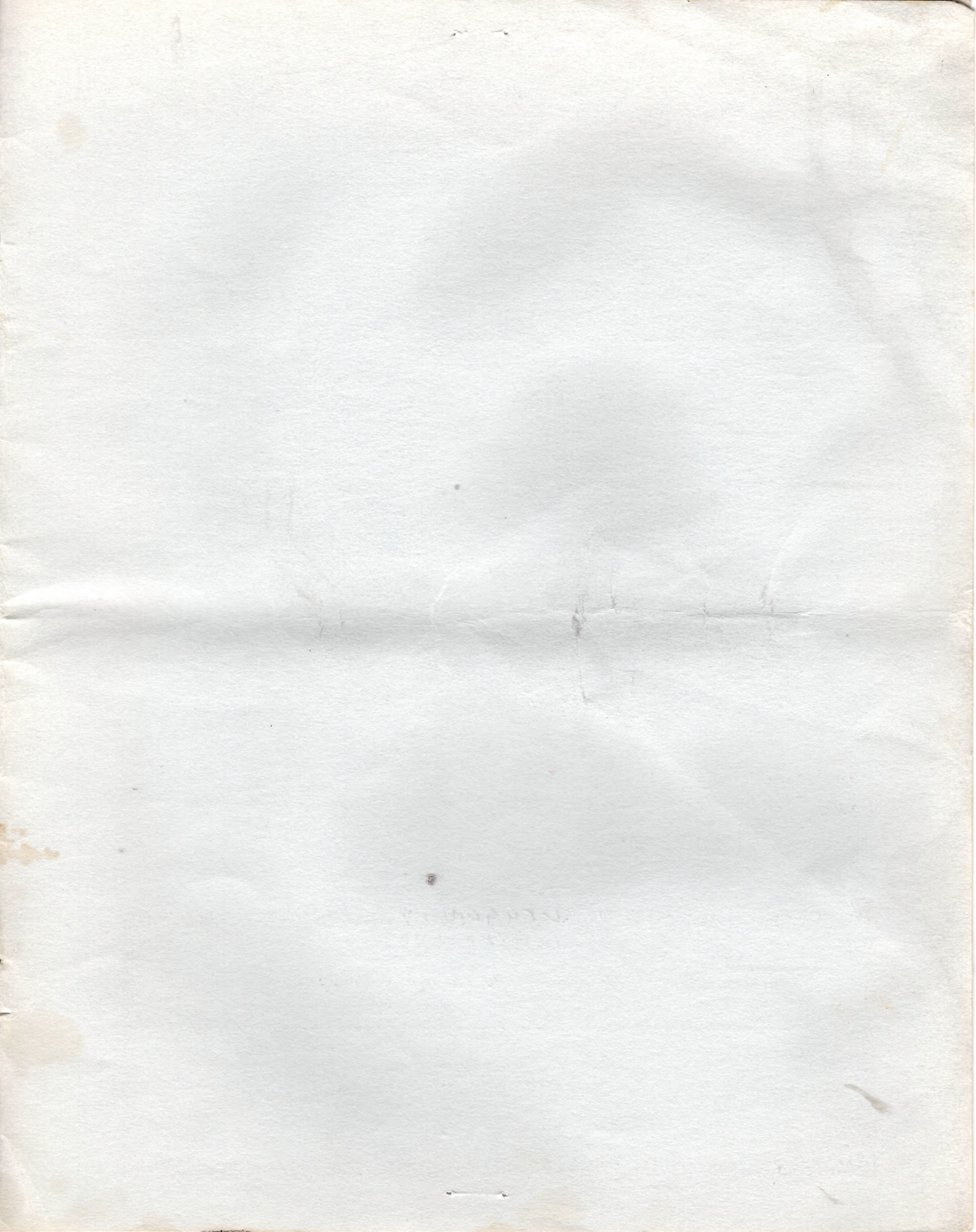
NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ PROVINCE/STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_







When they tie the can to the union person, sit down! Sit down!  
When they give us the sack, they'll take us back, sit down! Sit down!  
When the speed up comes, just twiddle your thumbs, sit down! Sit down!  
When the boss won't talk, don't take a walk, sit down! Sit down!

Labor Song from the 1930's

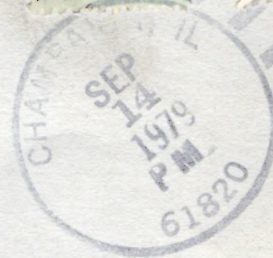
**Resurgence**

**Box 2824**

**Station A**

**Champaign, IL**

**61820**



Dragonfly

Mink Lake Rd.

Lake Saint Peter, Ont.

KOL 2K0

Canada

First  
Class